

Westgate-Bruner House,
Riceville, Pennsylvania

HABS No. Pa.-519

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PHOTOGRAPHS,
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 5-Pennsylvania
Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

Historic American Buildings Survey,
Karl E. Morrison, District Officer
319 Marine Bank Bldg., Erie, Pennsylvania

WESTGATE-BRUNER HOUSE
Riceville, Crawford County, Pennsylvania

Owner.

Arthur Hayes Westgate.

Date of Erection

Before 1847.

Architect

Unknown.

Builder

Benjamin Boles Westgate.

Present Condition

Fair.

Number of Stories

Part story and one-half and the rest one story.

Materials of Construction:

Native wood, mostly white pine. Interior walls plastered, hard fresco, native and stone foundation.

Records:

Family and Court House (Crawford County).

Additional Data-Bibliography:

An illustrated History of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Egle, William H., M.D. Harrisburg, DeWitt C. Goodrich & Co. 1876, Crawford.

History of Crawford County, Pennsylvania; Chicago Ill. Brown, Runk and Co., Publishers, 1890.

WESTGATE-BRUNER HOUSE
Riceville, Crawford County, Pennsylvania

A small cluster of houses, two church buildings, a mill and a post-office is about all that makes Riceville, Crawford County, Pennsylvania. But within the community some genius held sway back before the Civil War, for the builders constructed tiny homes for themselves, and small churches to worship in that are marvels of artistic design and hidden beauty.

On first sight the Westgate-Bruner house might appear to be like hundreds of small homes, weathered by time and badly in need of paint but the lines and composition of the materials make an impression that is most pleasing. It is a colonial structure with a hint of Cape Cod influence. The two front doors, each set between windows, give the effect of a double house. The four front windows are shuttered and each window has sixteen lights of glass. The window and door sash, and blinds are hand-made, put together with wooden dowels or pins or pegs.

On the side of each door are pilasters, which support a door shelf. The doors are six-paneled, with thumb latch, (the original hardware). The chimneys are of brick and the roof is covered with wooden shingle. The doors have the original graining still visible on the panels. The "return" of the pilasters on the door frame carries out the design of the cap of the pilasters. The doors are each reached by a single step from a stone imbedded in the earth and flush with it. The house has white pine siding which is beautifully weathered to a grey color. The cornice moulding is an intricate turning of curves.

There are thirteen windows on the first floor and six on the second. Each front door leads into a room, one of which contained a "bed sink" originally which has been partitioned off for use as a small store room. Between these two front rooms a small hallway is taken off of the room containing the bed sink, and also between the rooms the stairway to the second story is located leading up from the hall. The original wall paper is still on the walls of one front room and is of a graceful design of flowers within panels. It has been remarkably preserved through the years.

The kitchen had a large red brick oven which was built flush with the rear wall and out onto a back porch where a pump was also installed. This oven or fire-place was about four feet long. It was changed and discarded in 1880 or thereabout. The rear of the house is arranged for small storage barns and out-houses, but all included under one very long roof. The hardware of the house has never been changed.

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Joshua Bruner bought the house of Benjamine Boles Westgate about 1865 and he and his wife lived in it until their deaths. They had eight children: William (deceased), Milton (deceased), Mary, wife of Jamss Atwood, Emma died young, Anna, wife of Arthur Hayes Westgate (deceased), Charles, Sarah, and John. Joshua Bruner came from Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. About 1912-13 Miss Sarah Bruner re-sold the house to her brother-in-law Arthur Hayes Westgate, but returns every summer to live in it. She was born in this house in 1867.

Amie Scott Baxter

Approved

Karl E. Morrison Dist. off.
July 31, 1936.

Rev. Oct. B. 1936. — T.H.W.